

MINUTES – MORRO BAY RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING – November 19, 2015

VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING – 5:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Chair Drew Sidaris, Commissioner Kevin Carroll, Commissioner Jeffrey Cox, Commissioner Al Romero, Commissioner Skip Sorich, Commissioner Robert Swain, Deputy City Manager Sam Taylor, Recreation Supervisor Heather Salyer-Frith and Recreation Supervisor Karen Sweeny.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Sidaris called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

<https://youtu.be/acm7x2ym4Ew?t=2m38s>

Deputy City Manager Taylor welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Skip Sorich, whose term will end in 2017; announced that Commissioner Kevin Carroll has been reappointed to a full term ending in 2020; and announced that Timothy Ross has also been appointed as a commissioner, with a term ending in 2020.

Deputy City Manager Taylor welcomed Tiffany Porter, new Recreation Services administrative assistant.

Recreation Supervisor Sweeny announced that assessments for Estero Bay Youth Basketball will be Saturday, November 21, at the Morro Bay High School gym.

PUBLIC COMMENT

<https://youtu.be/acm7x2ym4Ew?t=4m50s>

Nancy Castle of Morro Bay announced that the Morro Bay Thanksgiving Community Dinner would be from 1 to 3 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, and asked people to spread the word to those who are lonely or hungry on Thanksgiving. In the spirit of the season, she also thanked the commissioners for their service to the community.

The public comment period was closed.

A. CONSENT CALENDAR

Unless an item is pulled for separate action by the Commission, the following items are approved without discussion.

<https://youtu.be/acm7x2ym4Ew?t=6m12s>

A-1 RECREATION DEPARTMENT STATUS REPORT

RECOMMENDATION: Receive and file.

MOTION: Commissioner Cox moved to receive and file A-1. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Romero and carried unanimously, 6-0.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS

NONE

C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

D. NEW BUSINESS

D-1 PROGRAM EVALUATIONS: KIDS' CLUB 2014/15, KIDS' CAMP 2015, 2015 SUMMER/FALL ADULT SOFTBALL LEAGUE, 2015 ESTERO BAY FLAG FOOTBALL, 2015 LABOR DAY CLASSIC, 2015 YOUTH FUTSAL, 2015 BRIAN WATERBURY MEMORIAL ROCK TO PIER RUN & ROCK'N AROUND THE PIER HALF MARATHON

<https://youtu.be/acm7x2ym4Ew?t=6m45s>

Recreation Supervisor Heather Salyer-Frith presented program evaluations for Kids' Club 2014/15 and Kids' Camp 2015.

Recreation Supervisor Karen Sweeny presented program evaluations for 2015 Summer/Fall Adult Softball League, 2015 Estero Flag Football, 2015 Labor Day Classic, Youth Futsal, 2015 Brian Waterbury Memorial Rock to Pier Run & Rock'n Around the Pier Half Marathon.

MOTION: Commissioner Cox moved to receive D-1 for file. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carroll and carried unanimously, 6-0.

D-2 CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL REGARDING CONVERSION OF THE DEL MAR PARK HOCKEY RINK INTO PERMANENT PICKLEBALL COURTS

<https://youtu.be/acm7x2ym4Ew?t=20m41s>

Deputy City Manager Taylor said he had encouraged public comment on this matter by contacting groups who use the facility most often and by posting a notice at the site. He explained that last year the City engaged in the Local Economic Action Plan (LEAP) process, which included short-term, shot-in-the-arm economic development ideas to enhance community, quality of life and tourism. Pickleball was one of ten initiatives chosen to examine and find ways to encourage it in the community. He said the roller hockey rink is being used as a temporary pickleball location, and pickleball players are the primary users of the facility. Morro Bay Senior Citizens Inc. manages this activity for the City. Pickleball players have been asking for a permanent facility that meets requirements for sanctioned tournaments. Taylor noted that the key challenges are space and cost. He said Morro Bay Senior Citizens Inc. has pledged \$20,000 for pickleball court improvements and is willing to partner with the City on such a project. The other active users of the rink are countywide roller derby groups, who have lost rink space to other conversion projects. Taylor said the rink was completed in late 1995, at a time when roller hockey was much more popular than it is currently.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Shawna Gustafson of Central Coast Roller Derby supported roller derby and pickleball sharing the site. She said that besides Del Mar Park, the only space available for roller derby is Santa Rosa Park in San Luis Obispo.

Ruth Stewart of Central Coast Roller Derby supported continued use of the sites by both groups.

William Stewart questioned whether conversion of the site to permanent pickleball courts would be spending a lot of money to serve the needs of an "elite few."

Chuck Stoll, president of Morro Bay Senior Citizens Inc., said his organization supports conversion of the facility to permanent pickleball courts and is willing to contribute \$20,000 to help with conversion.

Kathy Ponting, chairperson of the Morro Bay Pickleball Steering Committee, supported permanent pickleball courts to support the needs of this fast-growing sport.

Ally Lawrence, captain of the SLOCO Junior Roller Derby Devils, asked that the Del Mar remain multi-use.

Jeff Napier favors converting the facility for pickleball. He noted that sanctioned tournaments require permanent nets.

Gary Nickerson, a visiting pickleball player from Santa Cruz, stopped by to add his support for permanent pickleball courts.

Sharon Bruce of Los Oso, who has been active in roller derby for 10 years, asked that the space be improved and the surface be smoothed out so that it could be used for multiple sports.

Dawn-Marie Little, president of Central Coast Roller Derby, advocated keeping the site a multi-use space. She said the roller derby community would help with raising funds for improvements.

Susan Craig, a Morro Bay resident and business owner, supported permanent pickleball courts, noting that it would make it easier for people of all ages to play pickleball.

Tom Loganbill, president of the Cambria pickleball club, supports permanent pickleball courts, which he said would contribute to the local economy.

Mariah Estrada of Central Coast Roller Derby asked the board to recommend that the courts remain multi-use. She also recommended resurfacing and adding lights.

Joseph Hilden voiced his support for pickleball.

Victoria Betz, a roller derby supporter, advocated that the groups work together and raise funds to help maintain the rink.

Robert Thomas, a Morro Bay resident, supported permanent pickleball courts, noting that this plan would best serve the greatest number of people.

Chairman Sidaris asked Deputy City Manager Taylor for clarification on whether the area could still be used for roller hockey after it was resurfaced for pickleball.

Deputy City Manager Taylor said that if it were improved to the standards required for sanctioned pickleball tournaments, it could not be used for roller sports.

Chairman Sidaris said it was clear that both groups wanted space for their sports, so it would be best to focus the remaining public comment on finding a way to satisfy both parties.

Vanessa Jones, aka Ribbons & Rage, said that with lights and a resurfaced track, her roller derby group would use Del Mar Park for practice at least twice a week and that the money now spent on renting other practices space could go to the community.

Erin Lawrence, president and founder of SLOCO Junior Roller Derby, said participants come from as far as Nipomo and Paso Robles. She said her group would help with funding to get the Del Mar rink up to par for all sports if it remained multi-use.

Nancy Wise, a Morro Bay resident and retired physical educator, pointed out that pickleball can be played by people of all ages and all abilities, including those with special needs. She stressed that it is not a seniors-only activity.

The public comment period was closed.

Deputy City Manager Taylor clarified a few points from public comment:

- About 48.5 percent of Morro Bay residents are 50 or older, and the City has a smaller young population than most cities. Meanwhile, the majority of City recreation programs are youth related.
- Regarding lights at the Del Mar Park hockey rink, it was decided previously that the rink would not be lighted because it is near a residential neighborhood and because lighting is very costly.
- There are possibilities for bringing back rink space in the future should the board choose to recommend permanent pickleball courts. There is a long-term plan in place for additional fields, and when the wastewater treatment plan moves, it will open up 26 acres that will likely include park space.

Chair Sidaris asked about other possible sites within the City for skating. Deputy City Manager Taylor said the City has been looking for other locations that would be appropriate for pickleball, but no other sites have been found that could be converted easily and at low cost. Commissioners Cox and Sorich expressed their support for permanent pickleball courts and suggested that the City continue to look for alternative sites for skating. Commissioners Carroll and Swain expressed their desire to accommodate as many people as possible either by finding another space for skaters before converting the Del Mar Park space to permanent pickleball courts or by keeping the existing space multi-use.

Deputy City Manager Taylor and Recreation Supervisor Salyer-Frith explained that the Teen Center has an adopted master plan that includes a large outdoor multi-use space that could potentially include a roller rink, but funding has not been available. Grant funding could be sought, and it could become a possible community fundraising project.

MOTION: Chairman Sidaris moved to recommend to City Council that the City move forward with turning the Del Mar Park hockey rink into pickleball courts and that City staff do an exhaustive search for existing sites within the City that could be modified for use as a skate rink. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cox.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Swain urged that the site not become a permanent pickleball court until another site is found for roller sports.

Chairman Sidaris noted that moving ahead with permanent pickleball courts would bring in revenue, potentially freeing up funds for a future hockey rink or multi-use skating space.

Commissioner Swain noted that it will still cost money to fix up the existing site and convert it to permanent pickleball courts, and because it's a City program, the City will not be charging for use of the space.

Deputy City Manager Taylor said there are revenue-generating opportunities connected to pickleball, such as charging for tournaments, and there is potential for a funding mechanism to pay for maintaining the facility.

Commissioner Cox expressed concern about waiting until a skating site is found before moving ahead with permanent pickleball courts. He stressed that pickleball is a fast-growing, popular sport in this community right now, so right now is the time to move ahead with pickleball courts.

VOTE: The motion carried, 4-2 (Carroll and Swain opposed).

Deputy City Manager Taylor stated that the board's recommendation will go to City Council and that there will be additional opportunity for public comment at that time.

E. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

F. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m. to the next regular Recreation and Parks Commission meeting on **Thursday, January 21, 2016**, at 5:30 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Building, 209 Surf Street, Morro Bay, California.

Recorded by:

Tiffany Porter
Administrative Assistant